

Sustainability of the karst environment – Dinaric karst and other karst regions



doi: 104154/gc.2010.08

Geologia Croatica

EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

This issue 63/2 of *Geologia Croatica* is largely dedicated to the topic of karst, a theme we would like to include more often in our journal. Besides the usual editor, *Geologia Croatica* also has a guest editor Dr. Ognjen Bonacci. He has been appointed guest editor for this volume since he was the scientific organizer of the international interdisciplinary conference *Sustainability of the karst environment – Dinaric karst and other karst regions*, September 23–26, 2009. The conference was organized by the *Centre for Karst Gospić*, and was held at the spectacular Plitvice Lakes (UNESCO World Heritage Site), Croatia.

The objective of this international conference was to provide theoretical and practical contributions to the concept of sustainable development in karst regions, with specific emphasis on the experiences from the Dinaric karst region. Karst landscapes, in which dissolution of bedrock by water is the dominant process, characterise almost 20% of the continents and more than a quarter of the Earth's population lives on or near karst areas (FORD & WILLIAMS, 2007). Typical karst topography is essentially related to subterranean drainage and therefore geomorphology and hydrology are closely interrelated. The Dinaric karst stretches the length of the eastern coast of the Adriatic from the Bay of Trieste in the north to the Drin River in the south. This karst area is some 600 km in length, and up to 200 km in width. However, karst landscapes are present in many parts of the world, but most of the time these areas are shaped by a multitude of processes. The karst landscape is a unique geological envi-

ronment that extends not only on the surface but also underground, in a continuum of habitats and geo-ecosystems that still wait to be discovered and studied.

More than eighty presentations and posters were presented at the conference, and nine papers originated from presentations at the conference dealing with geological themes. All contributions have passed the regular reviewing procedure, since this is an ordinary volume of our journal *Geologia Croatica* although it is predominantly devoted to karst issues. Themes covered range from the evolution of caves, to understanding the hydrology of karst, and challenges to sustainability in karst terrains. Sustainable development of surface and subterranean water resources in karst, and the overall karst environment has been threatened by current climate change and climate variability in combination with anthropogenic impacts. Interdisciplinary studies are imperative in order to establish the possible consequences of such impacts and to find practical solutions to protect karst systems. After the "karstic" papers, there are three other interesting contributions spanning palaeontological to geochemical issues.

REFERENCES

FORD, D. & WILLIAMS, P. (2007): *Karst hydrogeology and geomorphology*.– John Wiley & Sons Ltd., Chichester, U.K., 562 p.

Ognjen Bonacci, Guest Editor and
Mladen Juračić, Editor-in-Chief

